

A photograph of two glasses of beer on a white marble table. The glass in the foreground is a tulip-shaped glass filled with golden beer and a thick head of white foam. The glass in the background is partially visible and also contains beer. In the background, a person is sitting at another table, and the setting appears to be an outdoor cafe or bar.

# Disarmament Talks

Den  
Holson

Short poems  
and other  
word games

# *Disarmament Talks*

*Den Holson*

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## *Halfway To Heaven*



***Carpe Diem ;-)***

*Tis time, the tangled river seeks,  
this shadowed heart of me  
that haunts, its deeper pools  
where shade and stone,  
both cell and refuge,  
pen the known  
and baffle sight,  
drawing  
with flitting  
shapes that might,  
be baited hook  
or mayfly bite,  
a beat for  
fierce quicksilvered flight  
and sudden leap  
for life  
or light....*

***Happy Trails***

*Runway queen...*

*Thunder rider...*

*Sun belly....*

## ***Laughing***

*Laughing, her breasts  
are sweeter somehow,  
her rough nipples dawn  
pink and rising.*

*Laughing, her lips  
are like petals alive  
to the sun....*



## ***Moon***

*Mediterranean moon,  
I remember,  
in a less hospitable Nice,  
camping out on a hillside with you,  
looking out over the sea.*

*It was the summer of Abbeville,  
of Mâcon, of Arles;  
a trek across France  
in other people's cars:*

*you, always at the wheel,  
driving us on with your maps,  
your plans, your enthusiasms;*

*I, the young pretender,  
miles from nowhere,  
hitching a ride in your heart.*

## ***Aftermath***

*Marry me here,  
now, after the  
ceremony – throw  
the windows wide,  
we'll whisper our  
love to the wind.*

***Plop!***

*Fish jumps, wakes  
the rippled silence  
of the morning  
– and a lone  
cuckoo calls  
till there's an  
echo in the woods,  
as I sit yawning.*

## ***Greenfly***

*Green gem  
tangled in  
her hair  
– hovered  
for an instant  
in a sparkle  
of wings – and  
was gone,  
crushed  
by my  
careless  
fingers.*

## ***Swallow***

*Hunt the fly,  
low and high,*

*swallow,*  
*swallow,*

*swallow!*

## ***Kiss***

*Every kiss a  
wordless wedding;  
nothing between  
us but flesh,  
and fire....*

## *Notre Dame De Chartres*

*I came here to  
gape, not  
to worship  
— just coloured  
glass windows,  
old stone, and  
chipped statues,  
I said.*

*Who would have thought  
she'd have taken me  
half-way to heaven?*

*An Answer For The Sun*





*Heading for the airport  
– black swans on a bright pond,  
thin herons circling.*

*Dripping wet sunburst,  
but here is the place to be  
– high on Inchcailloch!*

*Not so early now – white  
boat waking up the loch  
stills a faint cuckoo.*

*Video brings home  
every little detail,  
nothing left behind.*

*Flat Gatehouse water*  
– *black shape in the stubbled*  
*straw isn't a heron.*

*Burning, like beatengold in  
the sun, beech leaf dragon  
on a duck pond.*

*No-one in the dank  
cathedral – the great  
black bell is ringing itself.*

*Trying to explain - these  
tangled branches have  
an answer for the sun.*



## *Um Bla*



*List!*

*Ka  
nu  
he  
ra  
pater  
ni  
mer  
jin  
?*

## ***Pyrgos***

*A hoppity-skipity insect ran  
over the ruins at Pyrgos.*

*It hopped and skittered  
and flew and ran,  
over the ruins at Pyrgos.*

*Paid no heed to the crumbling  
span of a palace wrought by  
Minoan Man, just went  
hoppity-skip and ran  
over the ruins at Pyrgos.*

## ***Memo Random***

*Properly speaking, there is  
in no sense a gap in the  
cultural span.*

*This is a fortunate thing,  
for who can tell for sure  
what the implications and  
inevitable effects of such  
a gap might be?*

*Especially in view of the  
recent influx of flat fat parrots  
from New Orleans, and the  
bread and butter glut so well  
documented by the Inter-  
continental Committee for the  
Review of the Salaries of Emperors.*

*Make the moment white, sir!  
And keep taking the pigeons....*

***Veggie Stew***

*Still life is:  
still life*

***San G.***

*San  
Gimignano!*

*Turning from her  
balcony in the  
Tuscan hills,*

*a girl with  
edible  
nipples....*

***Just Cos***

*Because the wind is rising,  
because the sun is setting,  
because the time is now  
— be, cause!*

## ***Do Be Do***

*Just so, life is  
without meaning,  
but baby don't  
end it all,  
truth lies in the words  
that you're keening  
– without, outside, beyond;  
sing: outwith life  
there can be no meaning,  
and do be do be do....*



***Once more with feeling?***

*I  
don't  
think  
I  
care.*

## ***Drift***

*Three ducks, two seagulls  
trawl the setting sun,  
above these narrow boats  
they wheel, and brake,  
and... turn my idle eye  
(and so my heart) upon,  
this flight of fancy,  
these thoughts of you.*

## ***Um Bla***

*What? Find you time,  
you make me, take me?*

*Chelsea is Barcelona is ours?  
Tonight on its way?  
Earth as Heaven?*

*Gonna stay, ya – do  
me another river.*

*Fly me with heart,  
googling like Buddha,  
each future a just army.*

*Unter Den Linden*



*Breakfasting alone*  
*– one red rose on the table*  
*turns my dreaming home.*

*Too hot to hurry. Acorns  
falling like green hail  
all miss me anyway.*

*Getting nowhere fast  
– juggler at the traffic lights  
makes my Berlin tour.*

*Checkpoint Charlie shop  
– even in pieces, this wall  
is hard to escape.*



*Just murals now  
– imagination breaks out  
of the concrete nightmare.*

*No way to get you  
a Fantasy Filmfest poster  
– all stuck down fast!*

*Waterways and parks,  
housewives shopping on  
pushbikes – sun on the Ku'dam.*

*Aeroflot building  
– sitting eating tuna  
on Unter Den Linden.*

## *Disarmament Talks*



## ***Dummy***

*Where is the soul in this?  
Nowhere that I can see.  
Confusion – call it that –  
confusion has the heart  
and whole of me.*

*The rest – a shell that  
seems to live and  
fit the part  
– is only art:  
we wear it  
like a badge,  
call it fashion,  
sell the world  
a dummy.*

## ***Making It Pay***

*Tilting the balance  
is an anonymous  
fat man with a taste  
for old wine.*

*Covers a hand  
to flip a coin that I  
thought was mine.*

*Tips his hat, and  
grins his grin,  
'tails you lose,  
heads I win',  
he says.*

## *Venice*

*Venice, though  
the light is fading,  
jewels yet the parting day,  
jealous of the sun returning,  
gilding ev'ry dying ray,  
still with gold and  
ivory'd splendour  
stealing eye  
and heart  
away.*



## ***Girl On A Wall***

*Girl on a wall,  
in a picture frame,  
in a German hotel.*

*I imagine her  
    birling in  
a long blue dress  
– a peasant girl,  
who'd toss her hair  
    and smile.*

***The Eyes Have It!***

*Flailing from silken  
whorls of restless  
chocolate,  
a whirl and flit  
and flash of  
'fisher blue.*

## ***Festival Rag***

*The absent old gent  
spluttered resent  
when the tall-backed  
policeman moved  
him along – caught  
again ragged on  
main street, with  
the festival on....*

*Caught again trespassing  
on a public bench,  
caught again trespassing  
on a public bench,  
caught again trespassing  
on a public bench*

*and smelling of amnesia,  
  
with the festival on.*

## ***Disarmament Talks***

*Take me to your leader  
and I'll bring mine to you,  
we'll bury our differences,  
that's what we'll do (and  
their guns along with them).*

*If anyone asks, we can say  
it was self-defence, explain  
that their real names were  
Hiroshima and Nagasaki,  
mumble something  
about the sacrifices we all  
have to make in a war.*

*After it's all settled (before  
closing time, with any luck),  
you can take me to your local  
(or I'll take you to mine),  
and we'll celebrate.*

*Deal?*

## ***Trip***

*The trail wanders  
into the wood,  
then on down the hill.*

*Walk it.*

*Watch you don't trip!*

*Ricochet*



*Sushi at sunset*  
– *waiting on tram 17,*  
*grass between the tracks.*

*Say love is as real as  
a rainbow is – as true as a  
sparrow's song.*



*Better by far to  
have died for a star  
than to live for a reason.*

*Sunlight and tears; cupping  
and kissing your face  
– everything's fine now.*

*My beautiful Cat*  
*– biking down the long canal,*  
*dressed in sunshine.*

*Pretty girl cycling.  
Mister laid back rolling by  
loses his pedal.*

*Sun dazzled houseboat  
– silhouettes on bicycles  
bridge the white canal.*

*Ricochet of happiness –  
kechang, kechang, kechang,  
kechang, kechoong!*

## *After Words*

*Dedicated to:  
Catherine, Keiron, and Catriona.*



## ***Flight***

*Dis-con-nect-ed  
from your electricity,  
I am still here: bird on  
a bro-ken branch,  
awaiting a call  
to flight, but*

my flight,  
my flight  
my flight my flight  
my flight  
i o u i w



### ***Den Holson's Cat Poem***

*Bigger, better, more  
insightful than all the others  
in my madcap menagerie,  
was the one that got away.*

*Had it transfixed in my headlights  
a long moment, swear I did,  
eyes glittering in the night with  
something that made me think  
it panther, sleek and proud - only  
to watch it take the chance to  
slip away on the legs I gave  
it, a glimmer of unfathomed  
soul, padding off into  
darkness on the last  
black cat to freedom.*